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Province of British Columbia

May It Please Your Honour:

It is my pleasure to submit to you the annual report of the Ministry of Attorney General of the Province of British Columbia for the period April 1, 1990, to March 31, 1991.

The Honourable Colin Gabelmann

The Honourable Colin Gabelmann
Attorney General
Province of British Columbia

Sir:
I have the honour to submit the annual report of the Ministry of Attorney General for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 1990, and ending March 31, 1991.

This report is an important public record outlining the work of each branch of the ministry. It also highlights some significant accomplishments of the ministry in 1990-1991.

This past year has been an important one for the justice system of British Columbia. Two years ago, in May 1989, the government published its response to the Justice Reform Committee's Access to Justice report. This response signalled the beginning of a series of initiatives to make our justice system more accessible, understandable, relevant and efficient.

In 1990-1991, we continued to build on the progress we made last year implementing comprehensive justice reform.

On July 1, 1990, the Supreme and County Courts merged to provide resident Supreme Court justices in every region of the province with the authority to hear any kind of civil or criminal case. In February 1991, a new Small Claims Act to

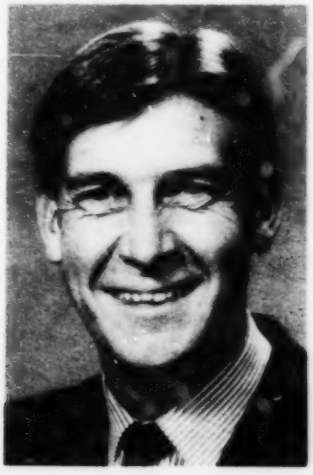
raise the jurisdiction in small claims and substantially increase court access came into effect. During the second year in a two-year Disclosure Court pilot project, we worked to streamline the criminal court process to reduce costs and inconvenience to witnesses. We implemented a Family Court pilot project to provide better access to the courts in family cases.

In addition, we used plain language to make our commonly used laws, rules and forms more understandable to all British Columbians. We continued to develop and implement a number of projects designed specifically for those with special needs to improve their access to justice in British Columbia.

I am proud of what we have accomplished over the past year, and look forward to even greater accomplishments in the future.

The commissions, boards and societies reported on here are required by statute to report annually through you to the legislature. This is not a substitute for those reports. Those commissions and boards will, in the ordinary way as required, file an annual report.

E. Robert A. Edwards
Deputy Attorney General
1992



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The Ministry of Attorney General: An Overview

In Canada, constitutional responsibility for the justice system is shared by the federal and provincial governments.

The federal government legislates criminal law and procedures and the laws relating to divorce, immigration, admiralty matters, bankruptcy and interprovincial trade and commerce. It is also responsible for prosecuting drug offences and for appointing Superior Court judges.

Provincial governments are responsible for the administration of justice, including the operation of all courts, the prosecution of criminal code offences and the appointment of Provincial Court judges. The provinces are also responsible for civil law other than divorce.

In British Columbia, the Attorney General is the chief law officer for the province, the official legal advisor to the Lieutenant Governor and the member of Cabinet responsible for legal affairs.

The Ministry of Attorney General is responsible for the administration and delivery of justice services to all communities in British Columbia. The ministry's mandate is to provide an accessible and fair justice system, responsive to the needs of the people it serves.

The ministry is divided into four branches:

- The Legal Services Branch prepares legislation, advises government ministries, agencies and tribunals in their legal matters, including constitutional questions, and conducts and regulates civil litigation for them.
- The Criminal Justice Branch conducts and regulates criminal proceedings through a regional system of prosecuting attorneys, called Crown Counsel.
- The Court Services Branch coordinates the administration of court services in British Columbia and provides administrative support to the judiciary.

- The Management Services and Justice Support Programs Branch administers justice-related programs and provides internal operational support for the ministry, and is responsible for the Office of the Public Trustee and the Land Title Branch.

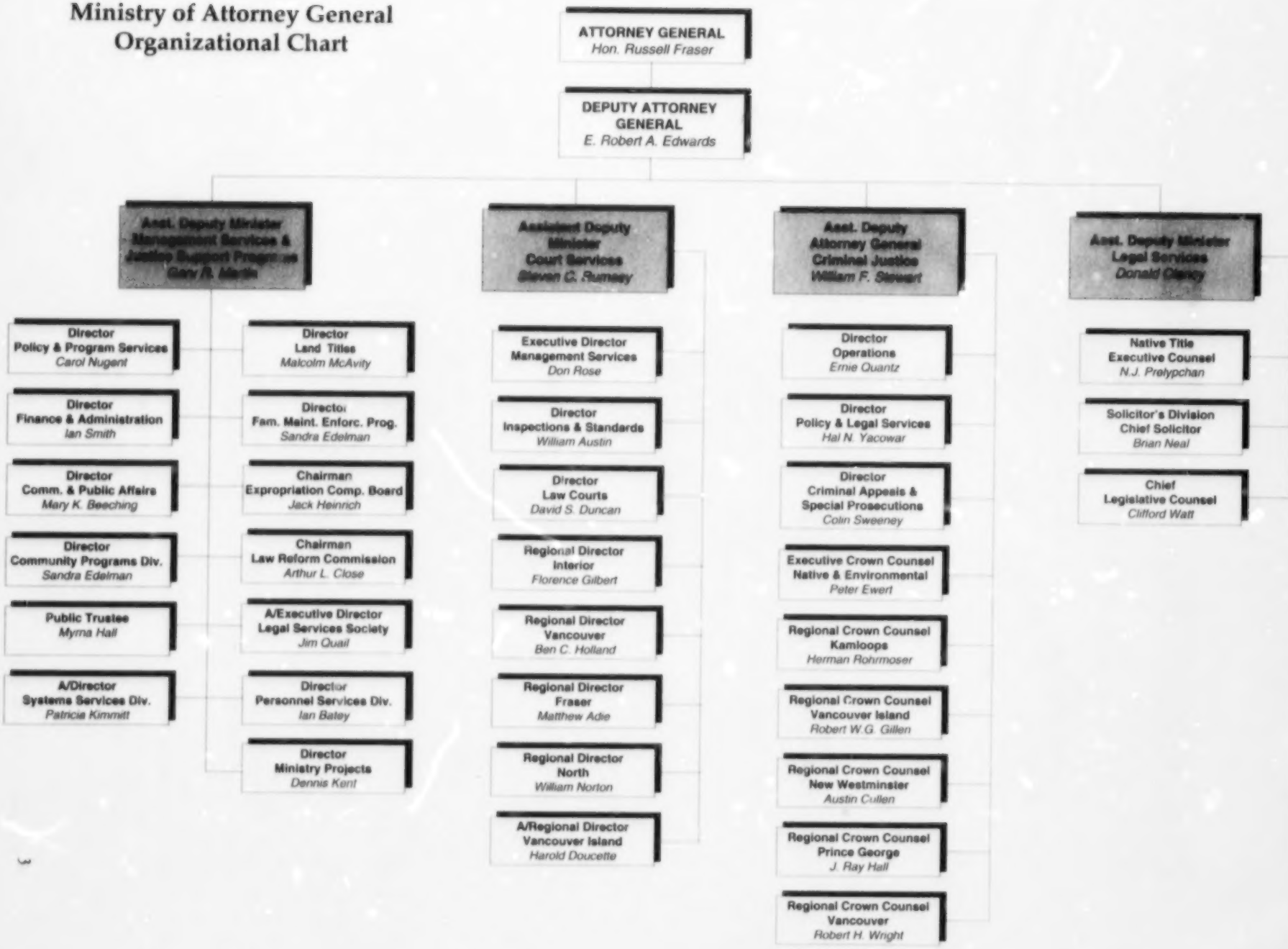
In addition, the Ministry of Attorney General oversees three administrative agencies:

- The Law Reform Commission reviews the laws of British Columbia and recommends ways in which they may be improved.
- The Expropriation Compensation Board determines the amount of money to be paid for expropriated land when the settlement amount is questioned by a private landowner.
- The Legal Services Society provides legal aid (legal services for people who cannot afford a lawyer) and legal information and education services for the province.

This report describes the individual responsibilities and accomplishments of each ministry branch and agency in detail, and contains a special section describing the ministry's progress over the past year on a number of projects initiated in response to Access to Justice, the report of the Justice Reform Committee published in November 1988.

The Justice Reform Initiative has affected every branch of the ministry. Implementation of justice reform projects has required the active involvement and personal commitment of all ministry personnel, individual lawyers, university law faculties, the Law Society, the Law Foundation, the Canadian Bar Association and a number of other provincial government ministries, including the Ministry of Solicitor General, the Ministry of Native Affairs and the Ministry of Social Services and Housing.

Ministry of Attorney General Organizational Chart



The Justice Reform Initiative: Year Two

The Justice Reform Committee was appointed by the provincial government in November 1987 and presented its report to the Attorney General in November 1988. This report, entitled Access to Justice, makes 182 recommendations for changes to the justice system of British Columbia to make it more accessible, understandable, relevant and efficient.

In December 1988, the Attorney General embarked on an extensive, two-month tour of the province to discuss the Justice Reform Committee's recommendations with members of the legal community and the general public.

In January 1989, the Attorney General established an advisory committee, comprising judges from the Provincial, County and Supreme Courts and lawyers from all regions of the province, to suggest the most efficient and effective ways to implement legal and procedural reforms.

On May 9, 1989, the Attorney General announced the government's response to the Justice Reform Committee report and outlined the ministry's long-term policy direction for implementing comprehensive justice reforms smoothly and efficiently.

Progress over the past two years has been remarkable.

In 1989-1990, we developed a new Small Claims Act and expanded the use of court Masters to substantially increase court access and affordability. Masters are lawyers appointed by the province to hear chambers matters and other pre-trial matters normally heard by Supreme Court Judges (chambers matters are normally procedural issues).

During the first year in a two-year Disclosure Court pilot project, we worked to streamline the criminal court process to reduce costs and inconvenience to witnesses.

Through the design and development of a new Family Court Model and amendments to legislation, we began the process of simplifying Family Law.

With the introduction of a major plain language initiative and the creation of a Plain Language Institute, we are moving forward in making our commonly used laws, rules and forms more understandable to all British Columbians. And through

a number of projects designed specifically for those with special needs - such as providing or planning for new handicapped access at all courthouses and establishing an Interministry Steering Committee on Native Justice Issues - we substantially increased social and cultural justice in this province.

This year, we continued to build on those accomplishments in each of the seven broad categories outlined by the Justice Reform Commission:

Increasing Access to the Courts

The volume and complexity of criminal and civil cases have increased dramatically in recent years, resulting in delays, rising costs, and, for many people, limited access to the court system.

To alleviate the pressure on the court system and to increase access to the courts, the ministry introduced a number of significant advances in 1990-1991, including:

- proclaiming a new Small Claims Act on February 25, 1991, to raise the jurisdiction in Small Claims Court from $3,000 to $10,000;
- merging the Supreme and County Courts on July 1, 1990, to provide resident Supreme Court justices in every region of the province with the authority to hear any kind of civil or criminal case;
- promoting the use of settlement conferences - pre-trial meetings with the judge - to explore ways to resolve the dispute before small claims cases go to trial. Since the program began, 70 to 80 per cent of all cases going to a settlement conference were successfully resolved pre-trial;
- evaluating pilot projects in Surrey and Victoria testing the effectiveness of expanding Small Claims and Family court hours to include evening and weekend court sittings; and
- establishing a two-month pilot project initiated by Court Services Branch staff in Richmond to test the effectiveness of providing court registry services in malls for paying fines and filing documents (initial evaluation shows the project to be very well-received).

Creating an Understandable Justice System

The government's response to the Access to Justice report states: "The justice system belongs to the people and its purpose is to serve them." In order to serve them well, the system must be both understood and understandable.

In 1990-1991, the ministry:

- expanded the programs of the Law Courts Education Society to include a greater emphasis on services to Natives, multi-cultural groups and remote communities, and opened new regional offices in Prince George and Surrey;
- produced and distributed a video, user guide and brochure to familiarize witnesses with court procedures;
- focus tested and refined new plain language Small Claims Court rules, brochures and forms to simplify small claims procedures and allow more people to pursue claims on their own, without a lawyer;
- proclaimed the Land Title Amendment Act in April 1990 to implement standard, one-page plain language legal forms to simplify and streamline title registration procedures; and
- continued funding the Plain Language Institute to provide leadership for both government and the private sector in the use of plain, understandable language.

Enhancing Prosecution and Enforcement Efforts

Criminal cases are becoming more complex and difficult to prosecute. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms, federal legislation and an emphasis on the rights of accused, victims and witnesses are placing new demands on prosecutors. Increased reporting of sexual abuse and increases in commercial and organized crime and youth gangs require specialized services.

Access to Justice recognizes that the criminal justice system must have substantial resources to provide adequate services to victims and witnesses and to increase the effectiveness of prosecutions and the efficiency of Criminal Court procedures.

The report also recognizes that the enforcement of provincial and municipal laws must be both consistent and meaningful - that the sanctions, usually fines, applied to those breaking the

law are uniformly applied and significant enough to deter a repetition of the infraction.

This year, the ministry initiated a number of specific steps to enhance prosecutions, strengthen enforcement and improve services to victims, and witnesses including:

- implementing the second year of a two-year Disclosure Court pilot project, designed to streamline the criminal court process, reduce costs and inconvenience to witnesses;
- decreasing the number and length of preliminary inquiries and trials by requiring Crown Counsel (prosecutors for the Crown) to fully disclose the details of the case to defence counsel early in the court process;
- introducing standard procedures for pre-trial applications to promote the fair and timely hearing of issues and reduce inconvenience for both witnesses and jurors;
- hiring additional full-time prosecutors and Criminal Justice Branch support staff;
- implementing new criminal justice policies to:
  - govern the use of private lawyers to supplement full-time prosecutors;
  - provide guidelines for police to appeal Crown Counsel decisions on the approval of criminal charges;
  - support full disclosure of the information on the case to defence counsel;
  - emphasize the seriousness of wife assault; and
  - reaffirm the use of diversion programs (alternatives to prosecution) whenever possible;
- evaluating the Wife Assault Coordination project, operated by seven community agencies across the province to ensure effective coordination of justice and support services for victims of wife assault, and developing priorities for better communication and stronger teamwork between community, social service and justice agencies;
- coordinating the reorganization of the Victim Assistance Program into eight regional sectors, in order to encourage the sharing of ideas and resources within each region, and to provide more consistent services for victims throughout the province;

- expanding Crown Counsel Victim/Witness Services to two new locations, and decentralizing services to incorporate victim/witness assistance into the day-to-day operations of Crown Counsel offices;
- holding a number of community workshops in the Lower Mainland to begin designing and developing new strategies for an integrated response by government, police, schools and community agencies to the problems and issues of criminal gangs;
- evaluating pilot projects in six court registries to test the effectiveness of using credit cards and debt collection agencies for fine enforcement; and
- continuing two pilot projects in Prince George and Kelowna to test the effectiveness of using a "Bylaw and Traffic Adjudicator" to settle municipal bylaw and traffic ticket disputes.

Simplifying Family Law

Family Law is one of the most complex and contentious legal areas - complex because of the split in responsibility between the federal and provincial governments, resulting in overlapping jurisdictions in the Supreme and Provincial Courts, and contentious because of the subject matter. As the Justice Reform Committee points out: "Probably no other area of the law is as many-sided or as emotionally charged as the law which attempts to deal with the results of a broken marriage."

The justice system is now dealing with significant increases in the number of child custody, access, family property, child and spousal support cases. To help ensure the fair and timely resolution of family disputes, the ministry implemented a number of family law projects in 1990-1991, including:

- implementing the Family Court Model pilot project outlined in the Court Jurisdiction and Family Law discussion paper - designed to provide better access to court and eliminate some of the problems of overlapping court jurisdictions - through:

- introducing a pilot project to place Family Court Advisors in 11 locations throughout the province. These advisors help with filing documents, filling out forms, providing general information and in seeking legal assistance when needed;
- designating some Provincial Court Registries as Supreme Court Filing Registries for family matters to improve access to the Supreme Court; and
- providing duty counsel to improve access to legal aid services by providing legal assistance or referrals to legal aid;

- participating on the Interministerial Steering Committee on Family Law Issues to develop new Family Court rules to standardize Family Court procedures throughout B.C.;
- continuing to participate in a federal/provincial Family Law project studying the feasibility of child support guidelines based on the actual costs of raising children in Canada; and
- enacting Rules of Court that improve the disclosure of financial information in maintenance and matrimonial property cases, including financial disclosure by businesses in which either party has an interest.

Helping People With Special Needs

The government's response to the Access to Justice report states: "The justice system must serve all British Columbians."

The ministry recognizes that cultural and language differences, physical and mental disabilities and lack of money should not be insurmountable barriers to justice.

In 1990-1991, the ministry has:

- provided new handicapped access, including ramps, parking spaces, upgraded washroom facilities, widened doorways and elevators or chair lifts, to 11 of 23 courthouses identified as needing more accessible facilities, and completed planning for the remaining courthouses to be renovated over the next three years;
- continued to participate on the Interministry Steering Committee on Native Justice Issues, comprising senior representatives from the RCMP and the Ministries of

Attorney General, Solicitor General and Native Affairs to facilitate changes in the administration of justice to make the system more accessible and relevant to Native British Columbians; and

- replacing seven Native Justice Regional Consultation Committees with 25 Local Justice Committees - members drawn from the RCMP, Crown Counsel, Corrections and the Ministry of Social Services and Housing. This ensures a simpler, more direct process for identifying and correcting local problems or issues, and promoting, evaluating and recommending local Native justice programs and projects for funding by the Steering Committee.

Applying Information Technology

A major theme in the Justice Reform Committee's report was the implementation of recent technology to improve justice system access and efficiency.

To further the effective introduction of new technology in 1990-1991, the ministry has:

- started to implement short- and long-term strategic plans for using technology to specifically improve:
  - access to the courts and their registries by both lawyers and the general public;
  - services to the public, particularly the hearing impaired;
  - management of the justice system through the development of management information systems; and
  - access to government legislation and regulations;
- evaluated a pilot project in the Court of Appeal to test the efficiency of facsimile filing for court documents, and began developing plans to expand facsimile filing to the Supreme Court; and
- installed and evaluated a pilot project to test the effectiveness of using imaging technology (a method of entering, storing and reproducing a document "picture" through a computer workstation) in Land Title Offices. The technology proved to both increase access to land title information and improve the speed of document processing, and will be expanded to other locations over the next year.

Revising Fees and Costs/Improving Case Management

In order to ensure that all legal fees charged to British Columbians are reasonable, the Legal Professions Act was revised in 1989. In September 1990, the new Act was proclaimed. The Act clearly defines the role of the Court Registrar in reviewing legal bills and firmly establishes the authority of the Law Society of British Columbia in setting a maximum schedule of fees which can be charged by lawyers on contingency agreements.

Amendments to the Rules of Court were also drafted in 1989 to increase the fees recoverable by the winners of lawsuits. In September 1990, the tariff (list) of costs was adjusted so that a person who wins a lawsuit can now recover approximately 50 per cent of her or his actual and reasonable costs, including additional enforcement or collection expenses.

Revised Supreme Court rules were published in September 1990, providing new court procedures that promote earlier disclosure of information and simplified case management by requiring new certificates of readiness and agreed case management programs for trials scheduled to last 10 or more days. The new rules also clarify the procedures governing conferences and mini-trials designed to encourage early settlements.

Legal Services Branch

Assistant Deputy Attorney General
Donald L. Clancy, Q.C.

Responsibility

The Legal Services Branch provides legal advice and services to government.

Barristers Division

The Barristers Division conducts lawsuits for and against the government in all areas of civil and constitutional law. Division lawyers appear for government ministries and agencies in every level of court, including the Supreme Court of Canada, and before tribunals, inquests, arbitration and other hearings.

Solicitors Division

Lawyers within the Solicitors Division negotiate and draft contracts, provide legal advice on government programs, policy and legislation, and legal representation before boards and commissions for all government ministries and agencies.

Office of the Legislative Counsel

The Office of the Legislative Counsel prepares all government legislation, regulations and orders-in-council. The office also prepares all statutory publications, including Third Reading Bills, the Annual Volume and Table of Statutes, and looseleaf updates of revised statutes and regulations.

The Office of the Registrar of Regulations is part of the Office of the Legislative Counsel. This office receives and files all regulations deposited under the Regulations Act.

Native Title Project

The Native Title project coordinates litigation affecting the province relating to Aboriginal interests.

Library Services

The Legal Services Branch operates full library services for the Ministry of Attorney General. The library maintains a central law and management collection and provides a province-wide legal reference service for government.

Highlights: 1990-1991

Committees and Task Forces

As part of the Interministerial Steering Committee on Family Law Issues, the Legal Services Branch assisted in developing new Family Court rules to standardize Family Court procedures throughout B.C. In addition, the branch continued to participate in a federal/provincial Family Law project studying the feasibility of child support guidelines based on the actual costs of raising children in Canada.

Division Reorganization

The Solicitors Division was reorganized in 1990-1991 to establish eight working groups. Each working group focuses on a particular area of law - such as health, family, tax or education - to encourage a cooperative, team approach to problem-solving and to allow the division to reallocate resources as needed.

Legislation

In 1990-1991, the Legal Services Branch prepared 80 draft Bills, including Bill 51 proposing amendments to the Residential Tenancy Act intended to prevent landlords from refusing to rent to tenants with children.

In addition, 74 Bills were proclaimed by the Legislative Assembly to become provincial law, including:

- the Members' Conflict of Interest Act, enacting conflict of interest rules for Members of the Legislative Assembly and establishing the office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner;
- the Private Post-Secondary Education Act, establishing the Private Post-Secondary Education Commission to register private post-secondary institutions and maintain standards set by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training; and
- the Medical Services Amendment Act, 1990, allowing Medical Services Plan subscribers to purchase travel insurance from private insurance companies to cover out-of-Canada medical expenses.

In addition, the branch continued to:

- re-draft the Adult Care Facilities regulations to recognize and establish standards for the many different classes of care provided by a Community Care Facility; and
- prepare ongoing amendments to the Mental Health Act in light of recent challenges to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms by patient advocacy groups.

Agreements

The branch negotiated and drafted a number of contracts for government ministries and agencies over the past year, including agreements between:

- the Ministry of Health and a number of hospitals in Washington State to provide open-heart surgery and cancer treatment for B.C. residents;
- the Ministry of Transportation and Highways and several highway maintenance contractors throughout the province;
- the province and the Victoria Commonwealth Games Society in relation to the 1994 Commonwealth Games; and
- the Nature Trust and the private owners of Kirkland Island - in the Fraser River near Ladner - for the use of the land as a waterfowl habitat. In July 1990, the Nature Trust purchased the Island, with a 99-year lease to the province.

Significant Cases

Harrison and Connell v. University of British Columbia / Stoffman v. Vancouver General Hospital
In both of these cases, the plaintiffs claimed that mandatory retirement at age 65 violates section 15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Supreme Court of Canada held that, while the mandatory retirement policies of U.B.C. and Vancouver General Hospital do indeed violate section 15 of the Charter, those same policies are reasonable limits on the rights and freedoms guaranteed in section 1. The court also stated that the B.C. Human Rights Act definition of "age" (between 45 and 65 years of age) was a reasonable limit under section 1.

Regina v. Sullivan and Lemay
In this case, the Supreme Court of Canada was called on to consider whether or not an unborn child constitutes a "person" as defined under the criminal negligence provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada. The court concluded that an unborn child does not constitute a person under the Criminal Code.

Reference Re: Appointment of Additional Members to the Senate
On September 27, 1990, the Governor General of Canada summoned eight people to become new members of the Senate. The province argued that these appointments were unconstitutional because they were made solely on the advice of the federal government, a process not authorized by the Constitution Act, 1867. The court held that the appointments were valid.

Delgamuukw et al. v. Her Majesty the Queen in Right of the Province of British Columbia et al.
In this case, members of the Gitksan and Wet'suwete'en claimed jurisdiction and control over 20,000 square miles of land in north central British Columbia. On March 8, 1991, following 374 days of trial between May 1987 and June 1990, the court rejected the claim. The Hon. Chief Justice Allan McEachern determined that the plaintiffs' aboriginal interests in the territory were lawfully extinguished during the province's colonial period. This judgment is now under appeal.

Canada Pension Plan Reference
In this case, the B.C. Court of Appeal determined that the federal government could not limit its obligation to contribute 50 per cent of B.C.'s costs in providing assistance and welfare services under the Canada Assistance Plan Act. The federal government appealed the case to the Supreme Court of Canada, where judgment was reserved.

The Province of British Columbia v. Sause Bros. Ocean Towing
The province is claiming clean-up costs and environmental damages against the U.S. company found liable in a 1989 oil spill off the west coast of Vancouver Island. Environmental damage is a new area of law in both Canada and the U.S., and the decision here could set precedents for the future. The case is currently being heard in the U.S. District Court of Portland, Oregon.

Kripps v. Touche Ross and Co. et al.
The Supreme Court of British Columbia dismissed an action alleging that the B.C. Superintendent of Brokers failed to protect the people who invested in a particular mortgage company. The court held, as a matter of law, that the superintendent did not owe a duty to protect individual investors, representing an important clarification of government authority liability. The case is currently under appeal.

MacAlpine v. Hardy et al.
In this case, the B.C. Court of Appeal determined that the province, as represented by the Superintendent of Family and Child Services, was not legally liable for property damage caused by a ward of the superintendent while in foster care. The case upholds the validity and enforceability of section 23 of the Family and Child Service Act, which provides immunity for government personnel for anything done or omitted in good faith in relation to the Act, and will likely set a precedent for upholding similar provisions in other legislative acts.

Ashmead v. Her Majesty the Queen et al.
This case involved a group of emergency room physicians seeking a declaration that the Medical Services Commission had wrongfully refused to pay for certain claims. The group took the position that the physicians, not the Medical Services Commission, should determine when a treatment is medically required and therefore billable. The court dismissed the action, determining that the commission holds the right to determine what constitutes an "insured service" and whether that service is medically required.

Her Majesty the Queen (B.C.) v. Kettle Valley Contracting Ltd. et al.
In this highly complex case, the province brought a suit against the contractor and sub-contractor hired to repair the anchoring system of the Okanagan floating bridge. The repair work proved defective and all 24 anchors had to be lifted and refabricated. The case was settled at the beginning of the trial, with the Crown receiving a payment of more than $2 million.

Her Majesty the Queen (B.C.) v. Gogo
This case involved a civil suit brought by the province against a logging contractor allegedly over-bidding on timber sales licenses, then failing to report all of the cut timber for scaling in order to avoid payment of stumpage and royalty fees. The contractor's actions effectively jeopardized the competitive bidding process, and the court determined in favour of the province, awarding sizeable damages against the contractor.

Other Activities in 1990-1991

Over the past year, the Legal Services Branch introduced "plain language" concepts to much of its work, particularly legislation.

In addition, the Office of the Legislative Counsel continued to investigate the use of information technology to provide computer access to statutes and regulations. Library services introduced a computerized, on-line public access catalogue. This new cataloguing system allows the library to revise its list of collections whenever new material arrives.

Criminal Justice Branch

Assistant Deputy Attorney General
William F. Stewart

Responsibility

The Criminal Justice Branch prosecutes offences under the Criminal Code of Canada, the Young Offenders Act, provincial statutes and certain municipal bylaws in the Provincial, Supreme and Appeal Courts of British Columbia and in the Supreme Court of Canada. The branch also provides legal advice on criminal law to government ministries and the police, and develops policies and procedures on issues relating to the prosecution of criminal cases.

Branch Headquarters

Branch headquarters administers the Crown Counsel system, including the interprovincial transfer of criminal charges and notifications under the protection-of-privacy provisions of the Criminal Code.

Together with Crown Counsel throughout the province, branch headquarters analyzes new and established legislation and participates on a number of federal/provincial committees and task forces. Headquarters also coordinates responses to policy or case inquiries from the public and other government departments, and manages branch responses to Native justice and environmental issues.

Regional Crown Counsel

Crown Counsel - lawyers who represent the interests of the state in a criminal case - conduct criminal prosecutions throughout British Columbia. Crown Counsel work out of 44 locations across the province, divided into five regions.

While most Crown Counsel will prosecute any kind of criminal case, a number of Crown Counsel are specifically designated to handle child sexual abuse, gang-related, environmental or commercial crime cases.

In all criminal cases, the duties of the Crown Counsel include deciding which charges to approve, which people to refer to diversion programs (alternatives to the traditional court system), and what information is required for presentation to the court at the time of sentencing.

Criminal Appeals and Special Prosecutions Office

Crown Counsel in the Criminal Appeals and Special Prosecutions Office conduct criminal appeals to the British Columbia Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada. A criminal appeal may be launched when either the Crown or the person convicted of the offence disagrees with the verdict or sentence handed down by the court and requests a higher court to review that decision.

Counsel in this office may also be called in by Regional Crown Counsel to prosecute extremely difficult or complex cases.

Highlights: 1990-1991

Branch Restructuring

The Criminal Justice Branch continued to restructure its organization to reach four specific goals: to improve its service delivery to the public; to demonstrate a strong commitment to its personnel; to create a more participative management style; and to ensure fair distribution of staff and financial resources throughout the province.

In 1990-1991, the branch published a Statement of Purpose and Principles to describe its overall mission, core values and beliefs. This statement unites the branch under one central purpose: "to contribute to the protection of society by preparing for and conducting prosecutions diligently and fairly, and by striving to develop the most effective methods to administer justice in our community."

In addition, the branch completed a detailed Performance Appraisal Form and appraisal process for all Crown Counsel, and offered Crown Counsel with five or more years of service as independent contractors the opportunity to become public

service employees. This initiative establishes a recognized career path for Crown Counsel.

Crown Counsel Policy Manual

The Criminal Justice Branch continued the development of a new Crown Counsel Policy Manual in 1990-1991.

This policy manual, designed to assist Crown Counsel in the consistent and effective prosecution of criminal cases throughout the province, establishes guidelines for the prosecution of cases ranging from child sexual and physical abuse and spousal assault, to civil disobedience, contempt of court, impaired driving and obscenity. The manual also includes policies governing the disclosure of information to defence counsel, victim impact statements, the charge approval system and media inquiries.

In addition, the branch created a special Policy Review Committee to regularly review, update and revise the Crown Counsel Policy Manual.

Over the past year, the committee continued to refine policies on child sexual and physical abuse and spousal assault. These refined policies include greater emphasis on appropriate charging practices; early trial scheduling for child sexual and physical abuse cases; and consideration for the victim and the victim's safety.

New Policy Initiatives

The Criminal Justice Branch finalized two new policy initiatives in 1990-1991 relating to the Owen Inquiry and the Askov decision.

The inquiry by Commissioner Stephen Owen - released in November 1990 - recommended that the branch appoint a "special prosecutor" from the private criminal bar to handle certain cases, particularly those involving government officials. In March 1991, the branch formally adopted this recommendation and also designed additional policies for the public disclosure of any directives or guidelines provided by

the Attorney General about specific prosecutions. The branch then began developing formal legislation to address these policies.

The Askov decision, handed down by the Supreme Court of Canada on October 18, 1990, determined that any case which is delayed more than six to eight months to the first available trial date may be stayed (discontinued) by the court. Given the possible implications of this decision for B.C., the Criminal Justice Branch worked with the Court Services Branch to ensure quick and effective case management through expanding computerized case tracking and developing new policies to govern the screening of cases, appeals, stays of proceedings, adjournment and date setting practices.

Crown Counsel Victim/Witness Services

Crown Counsel Victim/Witness Services focuses on victims of major emotional or physical trauma and on cases involving fatalities. Managers of Crown Counsel Victim/Witness Services coordinate caseworkers and volunteers to provide victims/witnesses with information about court procedures, court accompaniment, court orientation, assistance with forms and referral to community agencies as needed.

In 1990-1991, Crown Counsel Victim/Witness Services was expanded to two new locations in Terrace and Kamloops. Now operating out of eight locations across the province, Crown Counsel Victim/Witness Services was also decentralized to incorporate victim/witness assistance into the day-to-day operations of Crown Counsel offices.

In addition, the Criminal Justice Branch worked with the Policy and Program Services and Communications and Public Affairs Divisions to design, develop and distribute a video, user's guide and brochure to help prepare witnesses for court. The "Being A Witness" video and brochure review the basic steps in the court process, outline the sequence of events on the day of the trial, and offer suggestions on how to handle questions from lawyers.

Disclosure Court Pilot Project

The Disclosure Court pilot project, part of the ministry's Justice Reform Initiative, continued in the Vancouver Provincial Court in 1990-1991. This project, designed to streamline the criminal court process, requires Crown Counsel to fully disclose case details to defence counsel early in the court process.

Full disclosure allows counsel for both sides to evaluate the case before it goes to trial, consider appropriate pleas, eliminate witnesses from the witness list, and better estimate the amount of court time required.

Preliminary evaluation of the Disclosure Court model indicates that early disclosure can successfully decrease the number and length of preliminary inquiries and trials, and reduce the costs and inconvenience to witnesses.

Native Justice Issues

In 1990-1991, the Criminal Justice Branch developed a new program for the use of diversion in Native communities, where offenders who meet certain criteria are "diverted" from the Criminal Justice System if they agree to comply with various conditions or perform certain tasks. The Native Justice Diversion Program identifies which offences are suitable for diversion and works to increase Native commitment to diversion within the community.

Over the past year, the branch also encouraged Crown Counsel to place more creative sentencing options for Native offenders before the courts. These options include referring the offender to Native community programs as part of the sentence and seeking the advice of Native Elders and Chiefs on specific sentencing matters. In addition, the branch encouraged the use of community impact statements within the Native community, where information about the effects of a crime on the community may be collected by Crown Counsel and provided to the court when an offender is sentenced.

As part of the Provincial Steering Committee on Native Justice Issues, the branch participated in a number of consultations with Native communities to address justice

issues at the local and regional levels. The branch also initiated a program of cross-cultural training for branch management and Crown Counsel to encourage greater sensitivity in the delivery of services to Native British Columbians - victims, witnesses and offenders - and began developing a Native Equity Employment Program to increase the number of Native people employed within the Criminal Justice Branch.

Environmental Issues

The Criminal Justice Branch appointed a team of six specially designated Crown Counsel to prosecute a number of serious environmental cases in 1990-1991.

The branch worked with the Ministry of Environment to develop new environmental law policies and procedures to govern such issues as tree spiking - driving a metal spike into trees or logs to prevent logging - and Native hunting and fishing activities.

Criminal Gangs

In 1990-1991, the Criminal Justice Branch continued to aggressively prosecute gang-related activity through the Gang Prosecution Unit. Crown Counsel in this unit identify, monitor and prosecute gang-related cases and work closely with police gang squads to ensure that gang-related crime continues to receive special attention.

The branch also chairs the Interministry Committee on Criminal Gangs. Over the past year, this committee began developing new strategies for an integrated response by government, police, schools and community agencies to the problems and issues of criminal gangs.

Other Activities in 1990-1991

The Criminal Justice Branch participated in a variety of federal and provincial initiatives in 1990-1991, relating to such issues as Aboriginal justice, abortion, arson, criminal

procedure, homicide, mentally-ill accused, pornography, victims and witnesses of crime, proceeds of crime, young offenders and restitution to victims of crime.

In addition, the branch continued the aggressive prosecution of impaired driving and related offences, and implemented a pilot project in five B.C. communities to test a short-form Investigative Report for police to use in non-accident impaired driving investigations. If successful, the short-form report will reduce the number of police hours currently spent on paperwork. Branch representatives also continued to work with the Crown Police Liaison Committee, established to examine and address issues of mutual concern to police and Crown Counsel.

Assistant Deputy Minister
Steven C. Rumsey

Responsibility

The Court Services Branch is accountable to the Attorney General for providing court administration, sheriff and transcript services to all courts in British Columbia.

The branch is accountable to the Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and the Chief Judge of the Provincial Court for providing judicial administration independent of government.

Regional Court Services

British Columbia's court system has three levels of court, each hearing different kinds of cases.

The first level, the Provincial Court, operates through five divisions - Criminal Court, Traffic Court, Family Court, Youth Court and Small Claims Court - to handle minor criminal cases, traffic offences, family matters except divorce, youth offences and minor civil suits. The second level, the Supreme Court of B.C., hears serious criminal cases, civil cases over $10,000 and divorce. The B.C. Court of Appeal is the highest court. If a person involved in a civil or a criminal case disagrees with the decision handed down by either of the lower courts, he or she can request the Court of Appeal to review that decision.

Through six regional offices, the Court Services Branch provides B.C.'s 100 Provincial, 34 Supreme and three Appeal Court locations with:

- Court administration services to receive, register, file and process documents; receive and administer fines, fees and trust monies; prepare and maintain court files; manage court facilities; and provide general administration inside the courtroom, including court clerks to set trial dates, record pleas and dispositions.
- Judicial administration services to schedule trials; provide Justices of the Peace to hear bail applications and issue

warrants; and supply Supreme and Small Claims Court Registrars to carry out limited judicial functions under the direction of the court.

- Sheriff services to serve certain documents and to administer contracts for the execution of writs (seizing and disposing of the property of a debtor under the authority of a court order); to escort accused and convicted persons to and from the courts and between correctional facilities; to provide prisoner and courtroom security; to call citizens for jury duty and supervise jury deliberations.
- Transcript services to provide word for word copies of court proceedings, by either court reporters using shorthand or court recorders using audio equipment.

Facilities and Administrative Services

Under the direction of the Finance and Administration Division, Court Services undertook a number of building projects in 1990-1991, including a new 12-courtroom courthouse in Surrey, a one-courtroom courthouse in Creston, and two-courtroom courthouses in Maple Ridge and the Western Communities. In addition, the division managed the completion of a major courthouse expansion in Matsqui, continued renovations at the New Westminster courthouse, and finished planning for a new Law Court in Kelowna.

Branch Headquarters

Seven units work out of Court Services Branch headquarters to support and enhance the regional delivery of court services and to improve the administration of justice throughout the British Columbia court system.

- The Policy, Planning and Evaluation Section manages the development of policies and programs for the Court Services Branch. In addition to providing policy and program advice, this section monitors court trends and recommends, designs and directs branch programs, projects, research studies and evaluations.

- The Program and Project Implementation Section ensures that all branch programs and projects are effectively carried out. The section provides both leadership and support in the planning, implementation and maintenance of new branch projects and initiatives, and develops long- and short-term human resource management plans.
- The Methods, Procedures and Productivity Section finds new ways to improve court procedures and operations, with a specific focus on communications and increasing public access to the justice system. The section analyzes forms and records management policies and procedures; and evaluates internal communications manuals and materials.
- The Courts Information Section supports the delivery of services throughout B.C.'s court system by identifying and defining management information needs. The section collects, manages, analyzes statistics on court use and regularly provides information on branch programs, policies, facilities, workload, and specific issues as needed.
- The Resources and Special Projects Section provides advice to senior personnel on financial and resource management issues. The section also prepares the budget submission for branch headquarters; develops the annual headquarters training plan; and manages special projects.
- The Information Technology Planning Section develops tactical plans and strategies for the installation and use of new or improved computer technology throughout the Court Services Branch.
- The Inspections Program examines all aspects of Court Services Branch operations. The program plans and implements financial, operational, statistical and human resource inspections and recommends changes to policies and procedures where appropriate.

Highlights: 1990-1991

Of the 182 recommendations made by the Justice Reform Committee, 101 affected the Court Services Branch. Justice reform continued to be the major focus for branch activities over the past year:

Supreme Court Merger

On July 1, 1990, B.C.'s Supreme and County Courts were officially merged to provide resident Supreme Court Justices in every region of the province, with the authority to hear any kind of civil or criminal case. The Court Services Branch changed court forms, manuals and facilities in response to the merger.

Small Claims Court Program

The Court Services Branch coordinated the implementation of the Small Claims Court Program throughout B.C.'s court system. Formally introduced on February 25, 1991, this program provides plain language rules, brochures and forms to simplify small claims court procedures and allow more people to pursue claims on their own, without a lawyer.

Family Court Pilot Project

Eleven communities across B.C. took part in the Family Court pilot project in 1990-1991. The Court Services Branch directed and managed the project, including the placement of Family Court Advisors to improve public information services, the designation of Provincial Court Registries as Supreme Court Registries to file family court documents, and the addition of Family Court Duty Counsel to increase public access to legal aid. The Family Court pilot project was completed in October 1991, with a full evaluation to follow.

Credit Card and Debt Collection Pilot Project

In 1989-1990, the Court Services Branch implemented the Credit Card and Debt Collection pilot project. Three Court Registries tested the effectiveness of allowing credit cards for fine payment; three other Court Registries contracted with a private debt collection agency for fine enforcement. The branch evaluated the pilot project in 1990-1991 and, as a result of this evaluation, credit card payment has not been implemented. The branch will, however, continue to develop systems for using private debt collection agencies in other locations.

Evening and Weekend Sitting Pilot Project

Also in 1989-1990, the Court Services Branch implemented the Evening and Weekend Sitting pilot project to expand court hours in Small Claims and Family Court. After a full evaluation in 1990-1991, the branch determined that the extended court sittings were under-utilized.

A second pilot project, however, operated between February and March 1991, was extremely well received. In this project, the Richmond Court Registry offered Saturday hours at the Richmond Centre Mall for paying fines and filing court documents. Further evaluation in 1991-1992 will determine whether similar projects will be introduced at other locations in the future.

Native Justice Issues

In 1990-1991, the Court Services Branch developed a comprehensive plan to improve services to Native British Columbians across the province. As the first step in this improvement, the branch increased the number and length of court sittings on reserves.

Information Technology

The Court Services Branch began a major technology planning initiative in 1990-1991 to ensure that all courts are able to take advantage of automation to improve services to both the legal community and the public.

This initiative, implemented in conjunction with the Systems Services Division, included the development and installation of:

- a computerized rota for all Supreme Court Justices, to avoid or alleviate major trial coordination problems;
- a case tracking system to record and follow basic information - such as the date and location of the trial - for criminal, youth and traffic cases before the Provincial Court;
- a jury management system in the Vancouver Law Courts to automatically select jurors from the Provincial Voters List, issue summonses, record court attendance, calculate juror payments and provide statistics on court activity; and
- an expanded accounts receivable system in all 80 Court Registries across B.C. to record court fines; provide receipts

for all payments made through court registries; and work with systems in the Motor Vehicle Branch to allow payments for, and disputes against, traffic violation tickets.

In addition, the Court Services Branch introduced two new systems in Victoria for trial scheduling and police witness management. The trial scheduling system works with a number of ministry systems, including the Court Services case tracking system, to set cases for trial. The police witness management system, installed in seven Victoria-area police stations, provides computerized shift and holiday information to make it easier to schedule trials when police officers are on-duty and reduce the amount of overtime the officers have to spend in court.

The Court Services Branch also managed and evaluated a pilot project introducing facsimile filing in the Court of Appeal. The project was well-received by the legal community, and the branch is currently developing plans for expanding facsimile filing to the Supreme Court.

Other Activities in 1990-1991

The Askov decision, handed down by the Supreme Court of Canada on October 18, 1990, determined that any case which is delayed more than six to eight months from arrest to trial due to delays in the court system, may be stayed (discontinued) by the court. In 1990-1991, Court Services worked with the Criminal Justice Branch to ensure quick and effective case management of those cases at risk by scheduling the maximum use of court time and expanding computerized case tracking.

In addition, the Court Services Branch completed a review of current methods of making and transcribing court records to investigate the use of new technology in the future.

The branch also extended the use of private contractors to serve writs (court orders authorizing the seizure or sale of a debtor's property) to all regions of the province; published a number of updated procedure manuals, including the Criminal Case Processing Manual, the Exhibit Control Manual, and the Family Courts and Small Claims Manual; and continued to develop plain language brochures and forms.

Management Services and Justice Support Programs Branch

Assistant Deputy Minister
Gary R. Martin

General Responsibility

Six divisions work under the direction of the Assistant Deputy Minister, Management Services and Justice Support Programs. They administer justice-related programs and provide internal operational support - including policy, financial, facilities, personnel, communications, and systems services - for all branches of the ministry, the Expropriation Compensation Board and the Law Reform Commission. The branch is also responsible for the Office of the Public Trustee and the Land Title Branch.

Service Quality Program

In August of 1990 the Council of Deputy Ministers committed themselves to improving service quality within government. A Service Quality Coordinator for the ministry was appointed with directions to identify areas of service within the ministry which could be improved. Representatives from the four major branches were appointed to a Service Quality Council to ensure that service improvements were identified in all areas.

Under the Justice Reform initiative a number of programs were introduced which improved access to the justice system. A natural extension of these programs under Service Quality included identification of training needs to improve staff skill levels and service as well as the introduction of service quality business plans to identify service improvement targets.

Policy and Program Services Division

Responsibility

The Policy and Program Services Division provides policy analysis and policy advice on both ministry operations and the development and delivery of justice-related programs and projects.

The division also coordinates the Victim Assistance Program for the Ministry of Attorney General, and designs, develops and manages programs and projects to address such social and justice issues as wife assault, criminal youth gangs, Native justice, public legal education and plain language in law. In addition, the Policy and Program Services Division prepares and manages the ministry's legislation program. The division reviews all statutes - written laws or legislative acts - administered by the Ministry of Attorney General; evaluates proposals for reform from the public, lawyers, politicians, other government ministries or agencies and the Law Reform Commission and puts forward its own initiatives for legislative reform.

The division then produces policy submissions for Cabinet and its Committees; works with the Office of the Legislative Counsel to prepare draft bills and amendments; and assists the Attorney General in responding to questions about the bills in the Legislative Assembly.

Highlights: 1990-1991

Legislation Enacted

1. The Statutes Repeal Act, 1990, allowing obsolete or unused statutes to be withdrawn.
2. The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 1990, providing a special early retirement plan for judges.
3. The Foreign Money Claims Act, allowing the court to order someone who owes money to another person or organization to pay her or his debt in non-Canadian currency.
4. The International Sale of Goods Act, implementing the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods.

5. The Conflict of Laws Rules for Trusts Act, enacting a model developed by the Uniform Law Conference to provide a consistent system of conflict of laws rules on trust funds throughout Canada.
6. The Offence Amendment Act, 1990, amending the way in which traffic tickets are issued and changing the time allowed to dispute those tickets.
7. The Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, 1990, carrying out amendments to nine statutes administered by the Ministry of Attorney General. These amendments include technical changes - eliminating errors or tightening wording - to the Supreme Court, Commercial Arbitration, Regulations, Limitation, Family Relations and Offence Acts, and changes to the:
   - Court of Appeal Act, improving the procedure for dismissing certain applications made to the Court of Appeal, then abandoned;
   - Interpretation Act, clarifying the definition of "newspaper"; and
   - Jury Act, ensuring people with visual or hearing disabilities the right to serve as jurors.
8. The Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act (No. 2), 1990, enacting eight amendments to statutes administered by the Ministry of Attorney General, including changes to the:
   - Commercial Arbitration Act, clarifying the authority of an arbitrator to award the actual costs of an arbitration, rather than the costs which are necessarily tied to the Supreme Court tariff of costs;
   - Court of Appeal Act, allowing the Court of Appeal to sit outside Victoria and Vancouver;
   - Offence Act, removing the possibility of imprisonment for absolute liability offences - which are generally non-criminal in nature and include most traffic or parking violations - in agreement with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms;

- Provincial Court Act, giving Provincial Court judges the authority to hear interlocutory (pre-trial) applications in Supreme Court cases; and
- Small Claims Act, increasing the monetary jurisdiction in Small Claims Court from $5,000 to $10,000.

Legislation Introduced But Not Enacted as of March 31, 1991

1. The Structured Compensation Act (Bill 29), permitting the Supreme Court, in certain civil cases, to help set up an agreement between the parties for periodic payment of damages.
2. The Builders Lien Act (Bill 52), amending the current Act based on recommendations from the 1990 Report of the Select Standing Committee on Labour, Justice and Intergovernmental Relations.
3. The Statutory Appeals Procedure Act (Bill 69), carrying out recommendations of the Justice Reform Committee to clarify procedures for appealing the decisions of administrative bodies and officials.

The Victim Assistance Program

The Victim Assistance Program (VAP) of British Columbia is funded and coordinated by two government ministries - the Ministry of Attorney General and the Ministry of Solicitor General - to provide victims of crime with information, practical assistance and emotional support. Ninety-five separate victim programs operate through Crown Counsel and corrections offices, local police departments and community agencies across B.C.

Over the past three years, caseloads for the Victim Assistance Program have been steadily increasing. This increase is due to a number of factors, including an upward trend in the reporting of family violence - particularly against women and children - and the greater numbers of adult survivors of child sexual abuse coming forward to report their cases.

In 1990-1991, the Policy and Program Services Division responded to these increasing numbers by coordinating the reorganization of the 95 victim assistance programs into eight regional sectors.

These sectors are designed to encourage the sharing of ideas and resources within each region, and to provide more consistent services for victims throughout the province.

The division also worked with the Justice Institute to publish new curricula for volunteer training designed to improve volunteers' knowledge of the psychology of victimization, the criminal justice system and court processes. Two new handbooks for VAP coordinators were developed to ensure the consistent application of standards and procedures.

The first public report of the Victim Assistance Program, outlining VAP's services, past accomplishments and future plans was developed in conjunction with the Communications and Public Affairs Division. The division also began planning for the National Conference on Victimization to be held in Victoria, March 1992. Over 600 delegates from across Canada and the United States are expected to attend.

In addition, the Policy and Program Services Division awarded more than $65,000 in discretionary grants to help a number of community groups develop special victim assistance projects. This discretionary funding included a grant to the Elizabeth Fry Society for group counselling programs to assist male batterers, and a grant to the Open Learning Agency for the development of the "Insight: Abuse Prevention" series, shown on the Knowledge Network.

The Wife Assault Coordination Project

The Policy and Program Services Division monitors and manages seven contracts with community agencies for the Wife Assault Coordination project.

Each community agency provides a part-time worker to coordinate the activities of all social service and justice agencies responding to incidents of wife assault within the community; to ensure that each case of wife assault is consistently dealt with by the proper authorities; and to identify any gaps in service, communication or education.

In 1990-1991, the division worked with the Criminal Justice Branch, RCMP and Corrections to conduct a complete review

of the ministry's wife assault policy, and completed an evaluation of the Wife Assault Coordination project as a whole. This evaluation identified better communication and stronger teamwork between community, social service and justice agencies as priorities for the future.

The division also worked with the Native Urban Education Centre to plan and develop a four-day workshop, scheduled for April 1991, on "Strengthening the Circle: Native Community Response to Wife Assault." This workshop will bring together Native band members, shelter workers, RCMP and probation officers from across the province to discuss ways of improving responses to wife assault within the Native community.

Native Justice Issues

The Provincial Steering Committee on Native Justice Issues comprises representatives from the RCMP and the Ministries of Attorney General, Solicitor General and Native Affairs. The committee's central goal is to help change the administration of justice throughout B.C., to make the justice system more accessible, responsive and relevant to the Native people of British Columbia.

In 1990-1991, the Policy and Program Services Division provided a full-time policy analyst to work with the Steering Committee in coordinating 25 Local Justice Committees across the province and in administering Native justice funds.

In addition, the division managed short- and long-term contracts for over 40 justice projects or programs operated by Native bands, tribal councils and agencies. These projects included ten cross-cultural training seminars on Native culture, history and issues for justice system personnel; five Native Justice Worker programs to integrate Native tradition and culture with the existing justice system; and two Native victim assistance programs, focusing on the needs of both victims and offenders within the Native community.

Family Law Issues

In 1990-1991, as part of the Interministerial Steering Committee on Family Law Issues, the Policy and Program Services Division was involved in developing new Family Court rules to standardize Family Court procedures throughout B.C. The division also participated in a federal/provincial/territorial Family Law project to study the feasibility of child support guidelines based on the actual costs of raising children in Canada.

Criminal Gangs

The Policy and Program Services Division coordinates the Interministry Committee on Criminal Gangs. In 1990-1991, the division held a number of community workshops in the Lower Mainland to begin designing and developing new strategies for an integrated response by government, police, schools and community agencies to the problems and issues of criminal gangs.

The Small Claims Court Program

Over the past year, the Policy and Program Services Division publicly-tested a number of new plain language Small Claims Court rules, booklets, brochures and forms designed to simplify small claims court procedures and allow more people to pursue claims on their own, without a lawyer.

The tests - conducted in both Prince George and Vancouver - covered graphic design and colour-coding as well as general usefulness and ease of reading. Audience reaction was positive, and the ministry formally introduced the Small Claims Court Program on February 25, 1991.

Public Legal Education/ The Law Courts Education Society

The Policy and Program Services Division funds, monitors and manages contracts for special public legal education projects and for the Law Courts Education Society.

The Law Courts Education Society organizes court watching visits for school children and the general public in courthouses

across the province. In addition, the society provides specialized programs and workshops on the court process; offers short-term, courts-related work experience for high school and college students; produces school curricula and informational materials in a variety of languages; publishes the semi-annual CourtLink newsletter; and organizes professional development workshops at teacher conferences and community colleges. The society also coordinates courthouse activities for the annual Law Day Open House and organizes two-week summer law camps for Latin American, Punjabi, Chinese, Vietnamese and Native youth in a variety of locations around the province.

In 1990-1991, the society expanded its programs in the Interior and Lower Mainland West Regions; added new programs in Northern B.C. and the Fraser Valley through regional offices in Prince George and Surrey; and started planning for new regional programs on Vancouver Island. The society also developed Native cross-cultural workshops for court managers, initiated a variety of Native community court education programs, and implemented new curriculum guides for school children in grades five through seven.

Also in 1990-1991, the Policy and Program Services Division funded the development of a new manual for disabled persons to assist them in representing themselves in court, and worked with the federal government on developing and delivering a multi-cultural public legal education program through the People's Law School.

Community Programs Division

Responsibility

The Community Programs Division manages justice-related services and programs for special needs groups such as single parents, victims of crime and Native British Columbians. These programs are operated at the community-level by private organizations and non-profit agencies. The division also promotes the delivery of family law services by locating missing spouses and administering the Family Maintenance Enforcement Act.

Family Maintenance Enforcement

The Director of Community Programs Division is also the Director of Maintenance Enforcement, responsible for the operations of the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program and the Maintenance Enforcement Information Search Unit.

The Family Maintenance Enforcement Program (FMEP) enrols, monitors and enforces Maintenance Orders and Agreements that require separated or divorced spouses to continue providing financial support for their families.

The Maintenance Enforcement Information (MEIS) Unit searches for missing parents in order to settle such family law matters as child or spousal support, child custody, access or guardianship. A search request must come through one of three authorized agencies: the courts, the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program or the Ministry of Social Services and Housing.

Victim Assistance

The Community Programs Division monitors and manages contracts for 27 specialized victim assistance programs, the Victims Information Line, victim/witness services offered through the Salvation Army, and six Sexual Assault Centres.

Specialized victim assistance programs are community-based programs dealing specifically with the victims of wife assault, sexual assault and child sexual abuse. The Victims Information Line - 1-800-VICTIMS - is a free telephone service providing callers with easy access to information on victim programs and services across the province.

The Salvation Army Courtworker Program provides assistance to both victims and witnesses in Provincial Court who need information, counselling, referral to another agency or help with understanding and completing forms.

B.C.'s six Sexual Assault Centres offer counselling to the victims of sexual assault and provide 24-hour telephone crisis lines. Centre staff or volunteers will also accompany victims through medical, police and court proceedings.

Legal Assistance & Public Legal Education

The Community Programs Division also administers contracts with three community organizations to provide legal assistance and public legal education.

Under one contract, the Native Courtworker and Counselling Association assists Native British Columbians accused of a crime to understand the charges, find legal counsel and obtain bail. If a Native client is found guilty, a Native Courtworker from the association will speak to the court on his or her behalf during sentencing. The association also works to generally assess and improve the justice system's response to Natives in conflict with the law.

Through a second contract, the Victoria Dispute Resolution Centre provides alternate dispute resolution services for the Victoria area. Alternate dispute resolution searches for methods other than court to settle small claims and other minor civil disputes.

Under a third contract, the Public Legal Education Society conducts free law classes throughout the province to inform citizens of their rights and responsibilities under the law. The society also publishes brochures and produces videos offering simple explanations of important legal issues and produces the annual Justice Theatre at the Pacific National Exhibition in Vancouver.

Highlights: 1990-1991

Family Maintenance Enforcement Program

The Family Maintenance Enforcement Program began operating province-wide in January 1989. The major problem FMEP faced in its first full year of operation was providing quick and timely enrolment for the thousands of people who wished to join the program. During 1990-1991, FMEP significantly improved its enrolment process, reducing enrolment time to only six to eight weeks in straight-forward cases.

Over the past year, FMEP also established a Central Payment Processing Unit to create a faster and more secure method of

processing maintenance cheques. A comprehensive Policy and Procedures Manual was developed to ensure the consistent application of policies and procedures in all FMEP offices, by all FMEP staff.

Specialized Victim Assistance Programs

In an effort to promote understanding and recognition of victims issues at the community level, the Community Programs Division participated in eight regional meetings across the province in 1990-1991 to discuss the needs, problems and successes of community-based victim assistance programs.

The division also assisted in developing a new training curriculum for victim assistance program volunteers. This new curriculum provides volunteers with an overview of the criminal justice and court systems, along with training on the psychology of victimization.

In addition, the division decentralized its system for monitoring statistics on victims of crime across the province. Making each program responsible for collecting statistics will improve the quality of data kept on the numbers and types of crimes committed against victims in B.C.

Finance and Administration Division

Responsibility

The Finance and Administration Division processes all ministry financial transactions (including payroll), prepares and allocates the ministry's annual budget, prepares financial reports and financial analyses of ministry operations, and develops financial policies, procedures and systems.

The Finance and Administration Division is also responsible for managing the ministry's facilities - both offices and courthouses. The division analyzes the ministry's building needs, plans and manages construction of new facilities, and prepares and monitors the ministry's Capital Project Plan. The division also coordinates a number of administrative support services, including vehicle and records management, mail, telecommunications and purchasing.

Highlights: 1990-1991

Financial Services

In 1990-1991, the Finance and Administration Division initiated a pilot project to decentralize the ministry's financial system. Under this new system, individual branches of the ministry are able to enter, track and retrieve financial data from their own computer workstations, creating quick access to that data and cutting down on paper flow between the division and branches.

The division also introduced the government-wide Diners Club Charge Card Program over the past year, replacing the previous system of cash advances with the more efficient corporate charge card for ministry travel. In addition, the division reviewed all ministry revenue to determine which services are taxable under the federal Goods and Services Tax, then implemented methods to collect and remit the GST on those services. The division also published a new Chart of Accounts Manual, providing ministry staff with a simpler, easier to read system of financial codes and explanations for managing income and expenditures.

Facilities and Administrative Services

The Finance and Administration Division managed the completion of a number of building projects in 1990-1991, including a new 12-courtroom courthouse in Surrey, a one-courtroom courthouse in Creston, and two-courtroom courthouses in Maple Ridge and the Western Communities. In addition, the division managed the completion of a major courthouse expansion in Matsqui, continued renovations at the New Westminster courthouse, and finished planning for a new Law Court in Kelowna.

In order to improve management of ministry facilities and related costs, the division also began development of a new computer system to record, track and report details on all facilities, projects and expenditures. The division also completed a guide for the planning and development of new court facilities and implemented standardized records

classification systems in the Criminal Justice, Legal Services and Managment Services and Justice Support Program Branches.

Personnel Services Division

Responsibility

Through five regional offices, the Personnel Services Division provides advice and service to both the Ministry of Attorney General and the Ministry of Solicitor General in all areas of personnel administration. Personnel administration includes labour relations, employee recruitment and selection, job classification and organization, policy development, occupational health and safety, and general human resource management.

Highlights: 1990-1991

Employee Workshops

The Personnel Division developed and delivered a number of employee workshops for ministry staff in 1990-1991. In one series, the division presented two-day workshops on "The Staffing Process Within the Public Service," designed to assist ministry branches in finding the best possible employee for each vacant position. In a second series, the division delivered two-and-a-half-day workshops for ministry managers and supervisors on "Job Description Writing and Job Evaluation." These workshops promoted the creation of more accurate and effective job descriptions, and introduced participants to a number of methods for determining job classification levels.

Other Activities in 1990-1991

The division's other activities for the year include completing a study of Native employment within the ministry and assisting in the creation of the ministry-wide Native Employment Initiative; developing an action plan to prepare employees for an earthquake; evaluating and classifying

support positions within the restructured Criminal Justice Branch; and participating in a salary review for Provincial Court Judges.

Communications and Public Affairs Division

Responsibility

The Communications and Public Affairs Division manages the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of ministry communications projects and services.

Client Services Unit

The Client Services Unit examines the information needs of ministry programs, services and major initiatives. From this information, the unit creates and executes communications plans for the development and distribution of public information materials, including pamphlets, brochures, annual reports, newsletters and audio-visual presentations.

The unit also prepares internal communications materials for ministry staff and manages the ministry's advertising and media relations programs. The unit's media relations activities include preparing news releases, coordinating news conferences and media events, answering media calls, and providing on-camera training for ministry staff when requested.

Public Affairs Unit

The unit also responds to the Attorney General's correspondence, coordinates special events as requested, and manages photographic services for the ministry. In addition, the Public Affairs Unit handles all applications for Notaries Public and Commissioners for Taking Affidavits, and processes ministry orders-in-council and ministerial appointments.

The Public Affairs Unit works directly with the Attorney General's office to coordinate all public launches of new ministry programs and materials and to prepare the minister's speeches and speaking notes for ministry events.

Highlights: 1990-1991

Division Reorganization

In 1990-1991, the Communications and Public Affairs Division produced a formal mandate statement to define its scope and responsibilities in communications activities. Built into the mandate was a model for restructuring the division to enhance communications service delivery.

This restructuring included an internal reorganization of division staff and resources to create the two new and distinct units, Client Services and Public Affairs; the installation of computerized budget approval, project tracking and desk-top publishing systems; and the implementation of new inventory and distribution mechanisms to manage public information and public legal education materials.

The ministry's executive committee endorsed both the mandate and the division's restructuring, and appointed the Director of the Communications and Public Affairs Division as a full member of the executive committee.

Communications Services

Over the past year, the Communications and Public Affairs Division continued to provide a full range of communications services to ministry divisions, branches and agencies, and to manage the communications components of the Justice Reform Initiative. Justice Reform projects in 1990-1991 included the production of a video to assist court witnesses and the publication of new, plain language Small Claims Court rules, brochures and forms.

In conjunction with the Court Services Branch, the division also began phase one of a study to determine what Court Registry users - including lawyers and media representatives as well as the general public - need to know about court processes and services. The second phase of the project, to begin in 1991-1992, will examine the specific legal information and education needs of the multi-cultural community.

Systems Services Division

Responsibility

The Systems Services Division develops ministry systems and acquires, maintains and evaluates ministry hardware and software. The division is also responsible for providing technical advice and strategic planning, for technology standards, data administration and quality assurance, and for user support.

Highlights: 1990-1991

Major projects implemented by the Systems Services Division in 1990-1991 include:

The Automated Case Tracking System (ACTS)

ACTS allows the Court Services Branch to track basic information - such as the date and location of the trial - for criminal, youth and traffic cases before the Provincial Court.

The Jury Management System

Installed in the Vancouver Law Courts, the Jury Management System automatically selects jurors from the Provincial Voters List, issues summonses, records court attendance, calculates juror payments and provides statistics on court activity for the Court Services Branch. Four additional sites will receive the Jury Management System in 1991-1992.

The Supreme Court System

The division carried out the first phase of the Supreme Court System, designed to alleviate or avoid major trial coordination problems, in January 1991. This first phase provides an automated system for managing the Supreme Court rota - the roster or list of all B.C. Supreme Court Judges. The second phase, to be installed over 1991-1992, will add computerized trial scheduling.

The Accounts Receivable and Collections System (ARC)

The ARC system was significantly expanded between October 1990 and March 1991, and is now available in all 80 Court Registries across the province. ARC maintains accounts receivable records on court fines; provides receipts for all payments made through court registries; and works with systems in the Motor Vehicle Branch to allow payments for, and disputes against, traffic violation tickets.

The Victoria Expansion Project

Through the Victoria Expansion Project, the Systems Services Division installed the Trial Scheduling and Police Witness Management Systems in Victoria. The Trial Scheduling System works with a number of other ministry systems - such as the Crown Counsel Index System and ACTS - to set cases for trial. The Police Witness Management System, installed in seven Victoria-area police stations, provides computerized shift and holiday information. This system makes it easier to schedule trials when police officers are on-duty, and reduces the amount of overtime the officers have to spend in court.

Other Activities in 1990-1991

The Systems Services Division assisted the Finance and Administration Division to install and stabilize a new, decentralized financial management and reporting system, and worked with the Land Title Branch to set up and evaluate imaging technology (a method of entering, storing and reproducing a document "picture" through a computer workstation).

In addition, the division installed personal computers at 47 offices of the Criminal Justice Branch and enhanced its support to ministry personnel by enlarging the staff, facilities and services of the Information Centre. The Information Centre now handles an average of 1,000 trouble calls per month and provides a regular news bulletin along with on-site support and software training for all ministry users.

Land Title Branch

Responsibility

The Land Title Branch maintains a register of ownership and other interests in land, and issues certificates confirming land ownership. The branch also creates titles for new land brought into the system by the Crown or new land parcels created by subdivision, and provides public search facilities to land title records. Through a land title search, a prospective buyer can determine who owns the land and any interests - such as mortgages, rights of way, restrictions or easements - currently registered against the land.

The Land Title Branch uses the Torrens Title Registration System. This system allows a person who has established that he or she is entitled to a particular piece of land to have that ownership not just registered, but guaranteed by the government.

Highlights: 1990-1991

During 1990-1991, the Land Title Branch received 993,000 applications and collected $22.5 million in registration fees.

In April 1990, the Attorney General introduced the Land Title Amendment Act. This Act formally implements standard, one-page plain language legal forms to simplify and streamline title registration procedures.

In September 1990, the branch finished entering all 1.5 million British Columbia land titles into the ALTOS computer database, creating faster and more efficient access to land title records across the province. Between May and November 1990, the branch also implemented a pilot project in the Victoria Land Title office to evaluate imaging technology, a method of entering, storing and reproducing "pictures" of land title applications.

Imaging technology proved both to increase access to land title information and to improve the speed of document processing. The branch will begin installing an image system in all six Land Title offices across the province in 1992-1993. Once installed, lawyers, real estate agents and financial institutions will be able to receive copies of all documents stored in Land Title offices through their own computer workstations.

During February 1991, the Vancouver Land Title office moved to a new site in New Westminster. In April 1991, the New Westminster Land Title office will move to the same site, allowing the branch to combine staff resources for faster, more consistent service to the Lower Mainland.

Office of the Public Trustee

Responsibility

The Office of the Public Trustee protects the legal rights and financial interests of mentally incapable persons, minors, deceased and missing persons.

Mentally Incapable Persons

When there is no other person willing and able to act, the Public Trustee may be appointed by the Supreme Court to serve as "Committee" (Kaw/mi-tea) to manage the financial and legal affairs of a mentally incapable person. As Committee, the Public Trustee's services may be as simple as paying bills and arranging for the purchase of a new television set, or as complex as hiring a manager to oversee an active business.

The Public Trustee also audits the accounts of "Private Committees" - friends, relatives or professional organizations such as Trust Companies - appointed by the court to represent mentally incapable persons, and investigates allegations of the financial abuse of mentally incapable persons.

Minors

The Public Trustee may also serve as "Official Guardian" to protect and manage the estate of a minor - a child under the age of 19 - who does not have a legal guardian. As Official Guardian, the Public Trustee pursues legal claims or other benefits on the minor's behalf, and invests and manages funds - such as I.C.B.C. benefits - until the minor reaches legal age and can act independently.

In addition, the Public Trustee investigates allegations of the financial abuse of minors, and reviews and makes recommendations to the court on all settlements of lawsuits involving minors.

Deceased and Missing Persons

The Public Trustee serves as "Official Administrator" for British Columbia and will act on behalf of any person who dies without leaving a will or without appointing someone who is willing and able to act as executor. As Official Administrator, the Public Trustee searches for heirs, establishes the heirs' respective rights to share in the estate, and distributes the estate.

The Public Trustee may also serve as "Curator" to safeguard the estate of a missing person until she or he is found or declared dead.

Highlights: 1990-1991

The Office of the Public Trustee handled approximately 24,000 cases in 1990-1991 and managed total assets valued at $359 million. Over the past year, the office also moved to larger, more efficient premises and began a new initiative to ensure more effective communications with the public.

As the first phase in improved communications, the office launched a new corporate identity to visually convey the Public Trustee's mission and philosophy. This new logo features two crossed keys, symbolizing protection, security and

responsibility, and a dove - the bird of freedom - illustrating the role of the Office of the Public Trustee in asserting and protecting human rights and independence.

In addition, the office reorganized the delivery of its trust administration services by setting new, more consistent service goals and performance measures, and improved its support to Private Committees by expanding education programs and simplifying reporting procedures.

Chair
Arthur L. Close, Q.C.

Responsibility

The Law Reform Commission reviews the laws of British Columbia and recommends ways in which they may be improved. The commission works to repeal unnecessary or outmoded legislation, eliminate irregularities, reduce the number of separate statutes and, in general, simplify and modernize the law.

Each year, the commission pursues a number of projects suggested by the Attorney General, members of the legal profession, judges or the general public on specific areas of law that require attention.

Since its creation in 1970, the Law Reform Commission has made over 100 formal reports to the Attorney General on a variety of topics. Some concern technical legal matters, but others - such as those which deal with family law issues - are of wider public interest. The commission's reports are published separately.

Highlights: 1990-1991

The Law Reform Commission completed and submitted five reports to the Attorney General in 1990-1991, covering such issues as law, mortgages, builders' liens, the process for swearing an affidavit and out-dated seizure and sale legislation. The commission also distributed two working papers, on apartment corporations and the division of pensions after marriage breakdown, for discussion and consultation.

In 1989, the commission completed a working paper on debtor-creditor relationships which outlined proposals for enforcing money judgments made by courts in other provinces. These proposals were later adopted, in principle, at a meeting of the Canadian Attorneys General and Ministers of Justice in June 1990. The commission's recommendations have now

been referred to the Uniform Law Conference of Canada for the development of Canada-wide legislation.

Also in 1990-1991, the Attorney General implemented a number of recommendations made by the commission in past reports, including the introduction of the Foreign Money Claims Act and amendments to the Law and Equity Act concerning the designation of retirement plan beneficiaries.

In addition, the commission developed and hosted the first Staff Development Workshop for lawyers working full-time in the law reform field, and has taken the lead in the creation of the Federation of Law Reform Agencies of Canada, intended to become an umbrella organization for Canada's law reform community. Once established, the federation will provide a method for law reform agencies to act collectively and to pursue joint projects.

The commission was also particularly pleased with the success of its Law Reform Database over the past year. In 1988, the commission began to develop a computerized database of law reform activity in Canada, the Commonwealth and selected American jurisdictions. Two versions of the database have since been published. The most recent version, released in August 1990, covers the work of virtually every Commonwealth law reform agency and contains records describing approximately 3,000 documents. It has now been distributed internationally and, as a result of an article and editorial in the Commonwealth Law Bulletin, the commission has received requests for the database from a variety of countries and institutions. These include legislative libraries, ranging in size from the American Library of Congress to the library serving the Parliament of the Isle of Man, international agencies such as the World Health Organization, and a number of ministries of justice and university law libraries.

Expropriation Compensation Board

Chair
Jack Heinrich, Q.C.

Responsibility

Expropriation occurs when public agencies, such as the provincial government, Crown corporations, regional districts, school districts, municipalities or public utilities, need to obtain property which an owner does not wish to sell.

Under the Expropriation Act, the Expropriation Compensation Board has the power to determine the amount of money to be paid for expropriated land when the settlement amount is questioned by a private landowner.

The board receives written requests for hearings from people whose land has been expropriated and holds public hearings for land compensation claims. Before coming to a decision on an award, the board assesses the market value of the land and considers a variety of issues affecting the owner, including loss in land value caused by expropriation or by the location of a new project or development nearby, reasonable legal and appraisal costs, moving expenses and business losses.

The board also makes decisions on pre-hearing issues, known as interlocutory matters. Interlocutory matters deal with such procedural issues as jurisdiction, documentation and the examination of witnesses.

After deciding on a compensation award, and for some pre-hearing decisions, the board will mail a detailed written response of its findings to the interested parties. All board decisions are later published by the Canada Law Book Company in the Land Compensation Reports.

Highlights: 1990-1991

In 1990-1991, the Expropriation Compensation Board received 70 applications for land compensation claims, 28 more than in 1989-1990. The largest number of applications, 35, came from land owners affected by Ministry of Transportation and Highways road expansion projects.

The board also published "Your Rights Under Expropriation," a pamphlet written in plain language describing the steps a land owner must take to question the amount of compensation offered by an expropriating agency.

Chair
Mark McEwan

Responsibility

The Legal Services Society provides legal aid - legal services for people who cannot afford a lawyer - and legal information and education services for the Province of British Columbia.

Funding for society services comes from three sources: the provincial government, the federal government through a cost-sharing agreement with the province, and the Law Foundation.

Legal Aid Services

The society provides legal aid services to low income British Columbians through 15 Branch Offices, 11 Community Law Offices, seven Native Community Law Offices and two Native Friendship Centres.

At these locations, staff lawyers, paralegals or private lawyers on referral handle a wide range of legal aid cases, from child custody, immigration and human rights cases to criminal appeals and Native hunting and fishing disputes. Any client who is eligible for legal aid receives the same representation as that offered by a paid private lawyer.

The society also provides duty counsel in criminal courts across the province. Duty counsel are lawyers who examine a client's case while he or she is in custody, and speak to the court on the client's behalf at his or her first appearance.

Legal Information Services

Legal Information Services coordinates three formal legal information and education programs, directed at both the general public and intermediaries - teachers and librarians, for example - who can provide legal education and information at the community level.

- The Schools Program works with secondary school teachers and students to promote education about the law and

publishes "Legal Perspectives," a bi-monthly magazine for teachers.

- The Public Legal Education Program produces plain language self-help materials, provides public advocacy training and funds community legal education workshops on such issues as welfare rights and GAIN benefits, seniors' benefits, landlord/tenant issues and employment law.
- The Legal Resource Centre is a law library for the general public and staff of all Legal Services Society offices. The centre also helps public libraries develop legal collections; provides legal information education to librarians; and operates the Law Line, a public telephone legal information service.

Native Programs Branch

The Society's Native Programs Branch coordinates the delivery of legal aid, information and education services to First Nations people.

Highlights: 1990-1991

The demand for legal aid services increased dramatically in 1990-1991. The number of family law cases alone - such as contested divorce, child custody and access - increased by a substantial 12 per cent. This increase in demand was complicated by the fact that, in some areas of the province, the society was unable to find private lawyers willing to take legal aid cases on referral.

In an effort to respond to this growing demand, particularly in the area of family law, the society developed a number of innovative projects over the past year, including a joint program with the Carrier-Sekani Tribal Council to provide culturally-sensitive assistance with child apprehension, custody and access cases. This program combines Family Court Duty Counsel, family law information and representation services with the Tribal Council's regular legal services.

Also in 1990-1991, the Legal Services Society introduced flexible eligibility guidelines for obtaining legal aid. These new guidelines recognize that the working poor can urgently need legal aid, and look at an applicant's debts and assets as well as her or his income. Now, the test for eligibility rests on the answer to one basic question: can the applicant afford the services of a lawyer without impairing her or his ability to feed, clothe and house her/himself and dependants? If the answer is no, the applicant is eligible for legal aid.

Other highlights for the past year include the continued success of the Law Line, which handled 13,046 inquiries in 1990-1991 for an average of 11.06 calls per hour, and the development of 24-hour Duty Counsel service. Through this service, a suspect detained on a criminal charge anywhere in the province has the option to either call a lawyer or phone a Duty Counsel toll-free, at any time of the day or night, for legal advice.

Annual Expenditures and Full-Time Staff

	1989/90 Expenditures	1990/91 Expenditures	1989/90 Staff	1990/91 Staff
Minister's Office	$ 253,918	$ 262,566	5	5
Ministry Operations				
Legal Services to Government	15,483,408	16,674,327	85	84
Criminal Justice	24,075,871	28,623,852	209	227
Court Services	96,536,758	105,075,505	1,245	1,229
Management Services	13,523,352	18,268,115	117	118
Justice Support Programs				
Expropriation Compensation Board	253,130	300,593	2	2
Land Title Branch	15,346,332	14,198,911	292	271
Legal Assistance and Services	32,587,461	43,690,109	7	8
Law Reform Commission	504,483	505,261	3	3
Office of the Public Trustee	6,340,854	7,963,260	-	-
Crown Proceeding Act*	564,763	1,595,091	-	-
Judiciary				
Superior Courts	5,387,198	6,643,511	81	82
Provincial Courts	15,537,874	18,476,950	29	35
Total	**$226,346,263**	**$262,278,051**	**2,075**	**2,064**

*Crown Proceeding Act: These are payments made as a result of cases against the Crown.

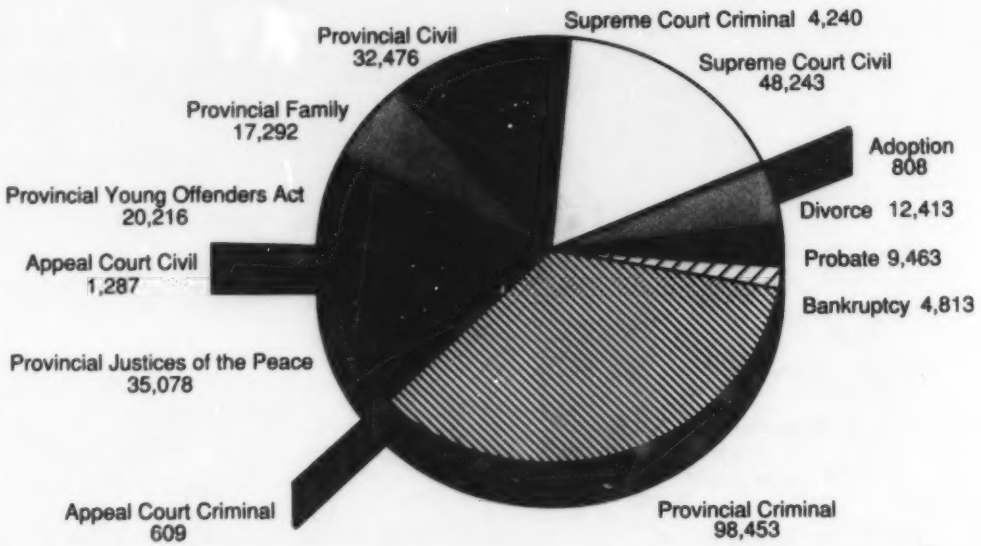
Acts Administered by the Attorney General (as of March 31, 1991)

Age of Majority Act
Attorney General Act [except section 2 (e) or (h) re: Police, Coroners, Racing Commission, Film Classification, O/C Patients Review Board, Parole Board, Motion Picture Appeal Board, Public Gaming Branch, Gaming Commission]
Builders' Lien Act
Civil Rights Protection Act
Commercial Arbitration Act
Commercial Tenancy Act
Company Act [only section 348]
Condominium Act [only powers and duties of Registrar of Titles]
Conflict of Laws Rules for Trusts Act
Constitutional Question Act
County Boundary Act
Court Agent Act
Court of Appeal Act
Court Order Enforcement Act
Court Order Interest Act
Court Rules Act
Court Franchise Act
Crown Proceeding Act
Curfew Act
Disciplinary Authority Protection Act
Escheat Act
Estate Administration Act
Estates of Missing Persons Act
Evidence Act
Expropriation Act
Family Compensation Act
Family Maintenance Enforcement Act
Family Relations Act [except section 3]
Federal Courts Jurisdiction Act
Financial Disclosure Act
Foreign Arbitral Awards Act
Foreign Money Claims Act

Fraudulent Conveyance Act
Fraudulent Preference Act
Frustrated Contract Act
Good Samaritan Act
Holiday Shopping Regulation Act
Homestead Act
Infants Act
International Trusts Act
International Sale of Goods Act
Interpretation Act
Judicial Review Procedure Act
Jury Act
Justice Administration Act
Land Act [Spouse Protection]
Land Title Act
Land Title Inquiry Act
Land Transfer Form Act
Law and Equity Act
Law Reform Commission Act
Legal Profession Act
Legal Services Society Act
Libel and Slander Act
Limitation Act
Municipal Act [only Part 20]
National Cablevision Limited Transfer of Jurisdiction Act
Negligence Act
Notaries Act
Occupiers Liability Act
Offence Act
Ombudsman Act
Partition of Property Act
Patients' Property Act
Pawnbrokers Act
Perpetuity Act
Power of Appointment Act
Power of Attorney Act
Privacy Act
Probate Recognition Act
Property Law Act
Provincial Court Act
Public Trustee Act
Queen's Counsel Act

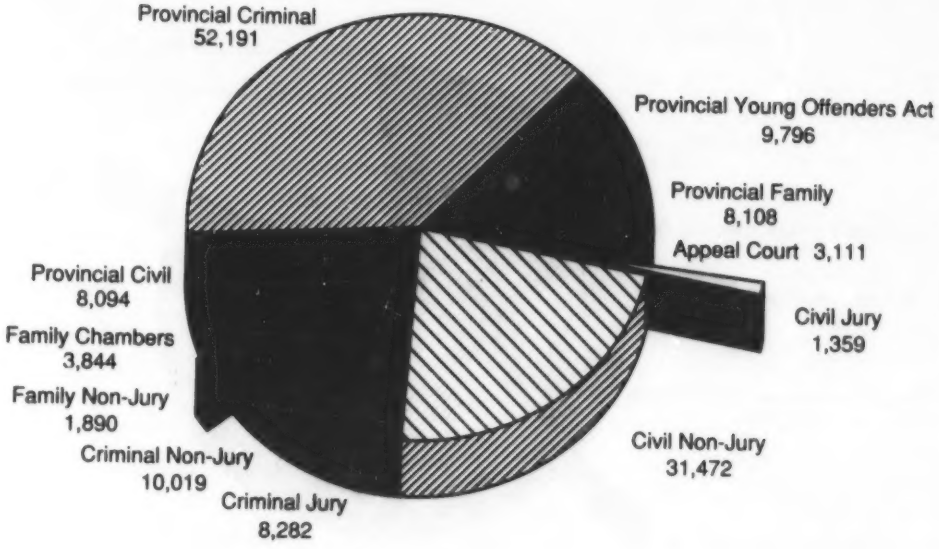
Regulations Act
Rent Distress Act
Sales on Consignment Act
Sheriff Act
Small Claims Act
Statute Revision Act
Statute Uniformity Act
Subpoena Act [Interprovincial]
Supreme Court Act
Survivorship and Presumption of Death Act
Trespass Act
Trust and Settlement Variation Act
Trustee Act
Trustee Act [Church Property]
Wills Act [except Part 2]
Wills Variation Act
Young Offenders Act [British Columbia]

Total New Cases
1990/91



Total New Cases = 283,391

Total Court Hours
1990/91



Total Hours = 138,165

REGIONAL MAP FOR COURTS

Region 1.
Vancouver Island Region

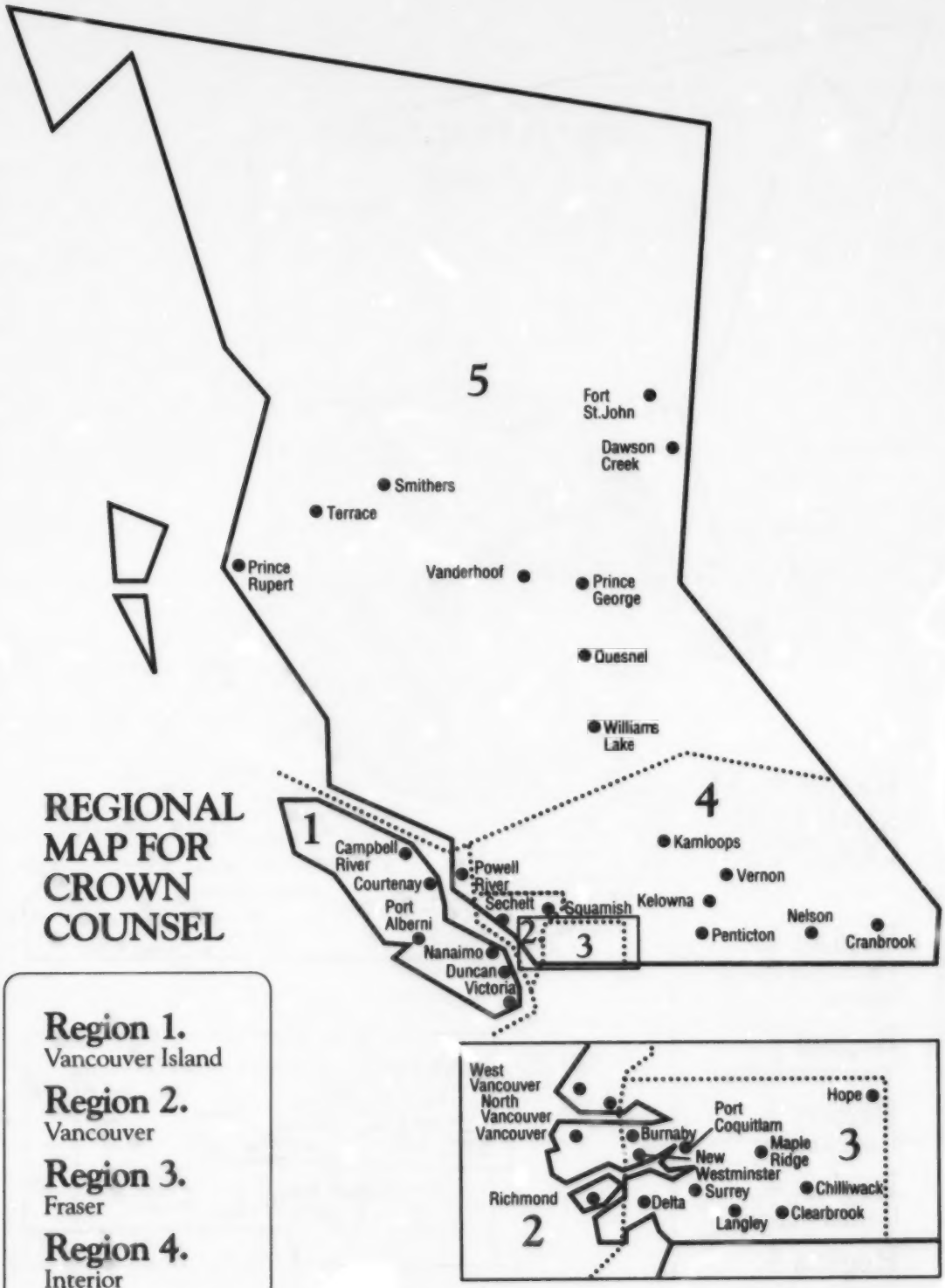
Region 2.
Vancouver Region

Region 3.
Fraser Region

Region 4.
Interior Region

Region 5.
Northern Region

Vancouver Law Courts



REGIONAL MAP FOR CROWN COUNSEL

Region 1.
Vancouver Island

Region 2.
Vancouver

Region 3.
Fraser

Region 4.
Interior

Region 5.
Northern